



By the King.

A Proclamation to reppresse all Piracies and Depredations vpon the Sea.



He Kings MAIESTIE being certeinly enformed through the manifold and dayly complaints made to his Highnesse, aswell by his owne Subjects as others, of the continuall Depredations, and Piracies committed on the Seas by certaine lewd and ill disposed persons; and finding that the ordinary proceedings held of late times for the suppressing of these enormities and offences, haue wrought lesse reformation then was expected: In his Princely care to preserue Justice, as one of the maine pillars of his Estate, and for the speedier supressing of all such Piracies and Depredacious crimes, most hatefull to his minde, and scandalous to his peaceable gouernment, and for the better continuance of Amitie with all other Princes and States; Hath with the advise of his Priuie Counsell, for the speedy preuention or seuere punishment hereafter of such fowle crimes and Piracies, Set downe certaine Articles herunto annexed, which his Highnesse commandeth all his Officers whom it may concerne, of what degree soever, to see duely executed, wherin if any maner of person shalbe found culpable or wilfully negligent, contemptuous, or disobedient, His Maiestie declareth hereby, that punishment shalbe inflicted vpon him or them with such seueritie, as the example thereof shall terrifie all others from committing any so odious crimes, or contemptuous offences.

Irst, that no man of Warre be furnished or set out to Sea by any of his Maiesties Subjects, vnder paine of Death and confiscacon of Lands and Goods, not onely to the Capaines and Mariners, but also to the Owners and Victuallers, if the Company of the saide Ship shall commit any Piracie, Depredation or murther at the Sea, vpon any of his Maiesties Friends.

Item, that if any person whatsoeuer shall vpon the Seas take any Ship that doeth belong to any of his Maiesties Friends and Allies, or to any of their Subjects, or shall take out of it by force any Goods of what nature or qualitie soever, he or they so offending shall suffer Death, with confiscacon of Lands and Goods, according to the Law in that case prouided.

Item, that all Admirall causes (except the causes now depending before the Commissioners for causes of Depredations) shalbe summarily heard by the Judge of the high Court of the Admiraltie, without admittting any vnecessary delay.

Item, that no appeale from him be admitted to the Defendant or Defendants in causes of Depredation, either against the Offenders, or their Accessaries, before or after the offence committed, or those in whose possession the Goods spoiled are found, Unlesse first by way of prouision, the summe adiudged be payd to the Plaintiff vpon Sureties to repay it, if the Sentence shalbe reversed.

Item, that no Prohibition in such cases of Spoile and their accessaries or dependances be granted hereafter.

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Item, that no Ship or Goods taken from any his Maiesties friends, shall be delivered by any other order then vpon prooife made in the sayd Court of the Admiralty, before the sayd Judge or his Deputie, to the end that a Record may be kept of all such Restitutions made to strangers, to serue when occasion shall require.

Item, that every Viceadmirall is enioyned by this Proclamation (whereof hee shall take notice at his perill) to certifie into the said Court of the Admiralty every quarter of the yeere what man of warre hath gone to the Sea, or returned home within that time, with any goods taken at Sea, or the procedue thereof, vpon paine to lose to his Maiestie (by Way of Fine) for every such default fortie pounds of currant money of England, to be answered into his Maiesties Receipt of the Exchequer, by Certificate from the said Judge of the Admiralty vnder the great Seale of that Office, to bee directed to the Lord Treasurer and the Barons of the Exchequer.

Item, that al the Kings Subiects shal forbeare from ayding or receiving of any Pirat or Sea-Rouer, or any person not being a known Merchant, by contracting, buying, selling or exchanging with them, or by victualling of them or any of their company, whereby they or any of them shalbe the more enabled to goe or returne to the Seas to commit any Piracie or disorder, vpon paine for so doing to be punished presently, as the principal offenders and Pirats ought to be.

Item, that the Viceadmirals, Customers, and the other Officers of the Ports, shal not suffer any Ship to goe to the Seas before such time as they respectively in their severall Ports haue duely searched and visited the same, to the intent to stay such persons as apparantly shall bee furnished for the Warres, and not for Merchandise or Fishing. And if there shall be any maner of suspicion that the sayd person, though he shall pretend to trade for Merchandise or Fishing, hath, or may haue an intent by his provisions or furniture, other wise then to vse the trade of Merchandise or Fishing, that in such case of suspicion the Officers of the Ports shall stay, and in no wise suffer the same to passe to the Seas without good bonds by sufficient sureties first had, to vse nothing but a lawfull trade of Merchandise or Fishing. And if the sayd Officers shall suffer any person other wise to repayre to the Seas then aboue is mentioned, they shall not onely answere for any Piracies which any such person shall chance hereafter to doe vpon the Seas, but shall suffer imprisonment vntill the offenders may be apprehended, if they shall be living. And generally his Maiestie declareth and denounceth all such Pirats and Rouers vpon the Seas to be out of his Maiesties Protection, and lawfully to bee by any person taken, punished, and suppressed with extremitie.

And whereas diuers great and enormous spoyles and Piracies haue been of late time committed within the Straits of Gyblaltar by Captaine Thomas Tomkins Gentleman, Edmond Bonham, Walter Ianuerin, Mariners, and diuers other English Pirats, and the Goods, Moneyes and Merchandizes brought into England by them, haue bene scattered, sold, and disposed of most lewdly and prodigally, by the means of their Receiuers, Comforters and Abettors, to the exceeding prejudice of his Maiesties good friends the Venetians, whom they haue robbed, and to the great displeasure of God, and dishonour of this State: His Maiestie doth expesly commannd all Lieutenants, Deputy Lieutenants, Admirals, Viceadmirals and their Deputies, and all other Officers of the Admiralty, and all Justices of the Peace, Maiors, Shiriffes, Bailiffes, Constables, and all other his Officers and Ministers whatsoeuer, to vse all care and diligence in the inquiring, searching for, and apprehending of all such Pirats, their Receiuers, Comforters, and Abettors. And if they shall by their trauailes and cares finde any of them, to send them presently vnder safe custodie to the common Gaoles of Hampshire or Dorsetshire, there to remaine without Bayle or Mainprise, till the Lord high Admirall of England or his Lieutenant the Judge of the high Court of the Admiralty shall dispose of them according to the Lawes in that case prouided.

Giuen at his Maiesties Cite of Winchester the xxx. day of September 1603. in the first yeere of his Highnes Reigne of England, France and Ireland, and of Scotland the seuen and thirtieth.

God saue the King.

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to the Kings most excellent Maiestie.

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